(c) All state's Government have been advised to take remedial measures including creation of separate cells to provide free legal counseling for the prospective brides. A booklet for the guidance of prospective brides and their families is being brought out by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.

Indian diplomatic missions abroad, whenever they receive a complaint of torture or desertion of Indian wives by their NRI husbands, render all possible assistance with a view to bringing about an amicable settlement.

Overseas Indian Citizenship

3789. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently announced Overseas Indian Citizenship (OIC) scheme;

(b) if so, the details of the schemes and the names of the specified countries;

(c) the number of applications received so far under the schemes and the action taken thereon;

(d) whether Government have decided to put on hold the said scheme; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Citizenship Act, 1955 was amended in 2003 to provide for registration of Persons of Indian Origin from 16 specified countries who fulfill specified criteria as Overseas Citizens of India. The names of 16 specified countries are:

(i) Australia
(ii) Canada
(iii) Finland
(iv) France
(v) Greece

(vi) Ireland

(vii) Israel

(viii) Italy

(ix) Netherlands

(x) New Zealand

(xi) Portugal

(xii) Republic of Cyprus

(xiii) Sweden

(xiv) Switzerland

(xv) United Kingdom

(xvi) United States of America

(c) MHA has received nearly 2000 applications from the concerned Missions/Posts.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The application form and the procedure for the Overseas Indian Citizenship Certificate are being revised/simplified by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Hence it was decided to put the scheme on hold to enable all the applicants to avail of the revised application form and the simplified procedure.

Core Group on Administrative Reforms

3790. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the recommendations of the Core Group on Administrative Reforms; and

(b) the response of the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) and (b) A Core Group on Administrative Reforms (CGAR) was constituted on 19 February, 2003 to formulate specific changes in the systems and procedures in consultation with the Ministries/Departments concerned and